

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# STATE

M A A Z I E



# DOGSOLDIERS

State's Security Blanket

SEPTEMBER 2006



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Photo by Darlene Kirk



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'The Center of the World.'



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# Africa's Future of Freedom

This summer at the State Department, I addressed the fifth annual Forum of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act and reiterated America's strong commitment to prosperity and good governance in Africa. Representatives of 37 sub-Saharan African countries gathered for two days of discussions, debates and dialogue. We reaf-



firmed that, when the United States and the nations of Africa work together, we combat the humanitarian crises that halt human progress, and we create opportunity throughout the continent.

Under President Bush's leadership, America has launched a development initiative in Africa that is a worthy heir of the Marshall Plan. Over the past five years, with

lessly to secure, 14 African countries are now receiving more than \$30 billion in debt relief. Our ultimate goal is to extend this initiative to 19 other countries in Africa, forgiving more than \$10 billion in additional debt.

At the same time, our Millennium Challenge Corporation is now signing development compacts with countries that govern justly, advance economic freedom and invest in their people. Right now, 12 African countries are eligible to apply for MCC grants, and four African governments have signed compacts with the MCC worth almost \$537 million.

Finally, the United States is rightfully standing with the peoples of Africa in their fight against diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS. Now in its third year, President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is on pace to meet our five-year, \$15 billion commitment for prevention, treatment and care. The path to defeat AIDS will be long and difficult, but each step along the way represents one more person who understands the threat, one more individual who can live with the disease and one more orphan who finds a home.

The United States does not view Africa as the sum of its problems, nor as an object of international pity. We view the men and women of Africa as authors of their own destiny—as individuals of agency and dignity who have the right to flourish in freedom and who bear the ultimate responsibility for their success.

Africans are addressing their own challenges and effecting extraordinary changes

“We view the men and women of Africa as authors of their own destiny.”

strong congressional support, President Bush has tripled foreign assistance to the countries of Africa. We are steadily on pace to double our aid again by 2010.

The United States has also taken historic steps to free many developing countries in Africa from the crushing burden of foreign debt. Under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, which our nation worked tire-

in their countries, and as they work to build a continent of hope, the men and women of the State Department will continue to work side by side as their full partners. Led by the strength and the spirit of Africa's citizens and bolstered by the dedicated service of America's diplomats, we will open a future of freedom, justice and opportunity for all. ■

# A Brother's Fate

With friends sharing their *State Magazine* with me, I was able to read "So We Will Never Forget" in your June issue.

This powerful account of American soldiers liberating a Nazi concentration camp may be history to most people today. But we survivors of those horrific times still deal with it.

After the end of World War II, I was quickly able to learn about the fate of my parents and of many members of my family. However, the fate of my only brother has remained a mystery. Little has come to light during the past 60-some years despite countless letters written to archives and search committees.

Then, during the past few months, my daughter began searching the Internet and came up with a wealth of information. She traced my brother's path through Auschwitz and several other camps. But just a few weeks before the end of the war the trail becomes muddled and unclear.

The end of the puzzle has not yet been put in place. But articles like yours ensure that we will always remember. Thank you!

**Frances Nunnally**  
*Richmond, Va.*

## Tolerance and Understanding

Ambassador O'Donnell's remarks at the Department's Holocaust Days of Remembrance (June issue) contain a reference to tolerance that I find somewhat disturbing. Although I understand why he used it, I don't appreciate why government underutilizes the word "understand" when describing events or issues that seem unclear. The word "tolerate" automatically conveys that something is bad, like a sore toe. In contrast, "understand" conveys that an event, issue or culture has been studied and therefore is good.

Immediately following 9/11, our national leadership all but begged the American public to be tolerant of unfamiliar cultures and peoples who lived in our midst. While this no doubt kept hostilities in our streets to nearly zero, little if anything has been done since then

to "understand" why this and similar events around the world occur.

Although U. S. diplomats learn to speak hundreds of foreign languages, languages don't shed much light on cultural diversity. Consequently, nothing positive filters through to clarify awareness and understanding of people who are different. State's narrow focus on U. S. policy-makers who seem content with tolerating, rather than understanding, differences between cultures appears to be more of a short-

coming than a positive influence. Since State knows a lot about moratoriums, how about one on the word "tolerate" for starters?

**Robert J. "Bob" Cumming**  
*Foreign Service officer, retired*



## Let Us Hear from You

### Mailing Address

State Magazine  
2401 E Street, NW  
HR/ER/SMG, SA-1, Room H-236  
Washington, DC 20522-0108



### E-mail

statemagazine@state.gov



### Phone

(202) 663-1700



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## Ibadan International School

Thank you for the article in the March issue about the addition of a high school to the Abuja International School. Information about such important facilities should reassure some timid FSO families contemplating service in unfamiliar cultures.

In spite of the sad ending of our 1961-64 tour in the Republic of Togo (their outstanding president, Sylvanus Olympio, was murdered in January 1963), among my great memories is visiting the brand-new international high school in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The curriculum was liberal-arts/college-prep, designed to equal Makarrere in Tanzania, Achimote in Ghana, and Andover, Exeter, Milton, etc., in New England.

I wonder what happened to that promising institution with a good mix of talented Nigerian, African and other foreign students.

**Leila Poullada**  
*Widow of FSO Leon B. Poullada*



# Advancing Transformational Diplomacy

In the last issue I reported on what we in the Management Family have achieved in fiscal year 2006 to advance transformational diplomacy. In June, we had our second M family off-site meeting to develop our FY07–08 priorities. These goals—organized around three broad themes—will build on and add to this year’s accomplishments.

**Theme 1 - Provide world-class services to our global customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.** Our priorities are the President’s Management Agenda—the administration’s strategy to improve and reform the management of the government—customer service and making transformational diplomacy operational.

Our goal is to reach the top rating—green—for competitive sourcing and E-gov and to remain at green for the human capital, improved financial management, budget and performance integration, real property and right-sized overseas presence initiatives.

To strengthen our customer service, we will establish standards for all major services, including benchmarks and measurements; create a customer service board as a feedback mechanism; and provide customer satisfaction surveys.

We will make transformational diplomacy operational by identifying and obtaining necessary resources, facilitating interagency collaboration and establishing a system to support transformational diplomacy over the long-term.

**Theme 2 - Make safe and secure our people, facilities, information and borders.** Our priorities are to create a secure platform to conduct foreign policy, implement the Visa/Passport Security Strategic Plan, consolidate information technology, strengthen our emergency preparedness, ensure provision of consular services and continue the momentum of our New Embassy Compound construction.

We will build a secure platform by increasing Diplomatic Security’s capacity to respond to contingency situations and global repositioning, execute the Department’s Soft Target strategy and increase the percentage of overseas mis-

sions that meet Overseas Security Policy Board standards for local guard coverage. We will implement the Visa/Passport Security Strategic Plan with an expanded investigation program and training for host governments.

We will consolidate information technology for improved customer service,



savings and governance through approval of the Department IT budget by the chief information officer and by increasing the number of servers that are consolidated, the services covered by the Info Center and OpenNet/AIDNet users. Information security continues to be a very high priority, and we are working to ensure that every IT system is certified and accredited as secure.

We will develop a comprehensive domestic and overseas emergency preparedness strategy and will measure our readiness through simulations, exercises, risk management and tests of critical infrastructure. Our goal is to have 100 percent of Bureau Emergency Action Plans viable and consistent with overall Department objectives.

On consular services, we will produce and begin distribution of the new e-Passport and new Passport Card for Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative travel; institute changes under “Plan Mexico” to meet burgeoning demands of the Border Crossing Card renewal; and

position the Department to meet visa demand in India, China and other areas of the world.

We will build on the momentum of New Embassy Compound and New Office Annex construction by completing 15 NEC/NOX projects in FY07 and 6 in FY08; by awarding 10 NEC/NOX contracts in FY07 and 10 in FY08; and by collecting 100 percent of tenant contributions. We plan to leverage the success of the Capital Security program and work for predictable funding to maintain and upgrade existing facilities.

**Theme 3 - Be the employer of choice by aggressively recruiting a skilled and diverse workforce, providing continuous career development and training and fostering an enhanced quality of life.** Our priorities are quality of life, recruitment and hiring, and career development.

On quality of life, we will continue our efforts with Congress to achieve Foreign Service pay modernization and will work on family member support, hardship tour incentives and equity, and Locally Employed Staff retirement compensation. You will play an important part in our “grade” by participating in employee satisfaction surveys.

We will work to increase diversity in hiring, recruitment and assignments with a focus on mid-level entries, Eligible Family Members, Civil Service-to-Foreign Service excursions, limited career appointments, student programs, Presidential Management Fellows and revisiting the Foreign Service Written Exam. We will address career ladders succession planning for Civil Service employees and fund the Cost Equalization Fund to support EFM hiring at post.

Our goals for career development will be met through expanded language training and distance learning, an expanded Support for National Action Plans program, institutionalized career development programs, and expanded and enhanced mentoring programs for CS, FS and LE Staff.

I look forward to reporting to you on our progress on these priorities over the coming months. Thank you for serving the Department of State and our nation. ■

# NEWS

## Embassy Team Shines in Long Canoe Race

Belize's ninth annual "La Ruta Maya Belize River Challenge," a 175-mile canoe race, has become one of the most popular endurance races in the country. It is recognized internationally as the second longest canoe race in the world, behind only the 260-mile Texas Water Safari.

The race, which took place in the spring, raises awareness of the natural beauty along the Belize and Macal Rivers and also raises funds for the protection of this fragile environment.

A U.S. Mission-sponsored team organized by Sera Moss, wife of deputy chief of mission Lloyd Moss, participated for the second straight year. This time, the U.S. team won first place in the mixed category.

Mrs. Moss hosted a fundraising dinner and dance to sponsor the team. Staff from the embassy, Peace Corps, Military Liaison Office and Drug Enforcement Agency all contributed. Peace Corps Administrative Officer Leticia Westby was instrumental in supporting the team through three months of training and preparation. Political Officer Brian DaRin participated in and finished this year's event.

All proceeds from the registration of participants of La Ruta Maya are donated to nongovernmental organizations working for the preservation of the environment along the Belize River valley. This valley is the main tributary to the Caribbean Sea, which feeds the major ecosystem of the Belize Barrier Reef, the longest living barrier reef in the world. It is renowned for spectacular diving.

Participants are treated to a unique and exciting tour for four days and three nights, which includes camping on the river's edge each evening. The fun and grueling race this year drew professional canoe racers from the U.S., England and Canada.

Mrs. Moss, though moving on to Jamaica this year, plans on returning to Belize next March—this time as a participant.



*Political Officer Brian DaRin gets a helping hand from his wife Tuya.*

AAFSW'S ANNUAL BOOKFAIR BEGINS + BASRAH YOUTH GET A MONTH OF PEACE + DG ADVISES SUMMER INTERNS + PROGRAM CEMENTS TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS + UNIT PROVIDES FINANCIAL SERVICES TO DANGEROUS POSTS + MONTH-LONG PROGRAM TO HIGHLIGHT CYBER SECURITY + STATE HAS THREE FINALISTS FOR SERVICE AWARD

## AAFSW's 46th Annual BOOKFAIR Opens Oct. 13

The 46th annual BOOKFAIR of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide will once more open its doors in mid-October. It has become a veritable institution, and some shoppers and volunteers come from considerable distances to participate.

Through the years, BOOKFAIR has donated more than \$1 million for Foreign Service family-member scholarships and community projects. In 1960, it started with an annual collection of some 7,500 books. Now, the annual collection of more than 100,000 books in many categories continues throughout the year. A large and varied Art Corner features items that have been



brought back by Foreign Service employees from all over the world.

BOOKFAIR starts Friday, Oct. 13, and runs from 2 to 5 p.m. It continues Oct. 16–20 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for employees, spouses and guests. During two weekends, October 14–15 and 21–22, the sale is open to everyone, the public included, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The event takes place in the Exhibit Hall of the Harry S Truman Building. Access is through the C Street entrance.

## BASRAH YOUTH GET A MONTH OF PEACE

On June 8, the Regional Embassy Office in Basrah, Iraq, organized an event at the Basrah Business Center for 67 political, religious and tribal leaders to sign a declaration of peace for the period of the 2006 World Cup in Germany, June 9 to July 9.

All the leaders signed the document so that the youth of Basrah could enjoy the games without the fear of violence.

The event included a speech by the Basrah governor and the distribution of soccer paraphernalia to 30 children representing the Shia, Sunni and Christian communities in Basrah. The soccer gifts were donated by British soccer star David Beckham and the Real Madrid Football Club.

The event showed that the political, religious and tribal leaders of Basrah can gather together under one roof for an event that celebrates sports and children.



## DG Advises Interns to Network and Learn

"The State Department is changing."

That's what Director General George Staples told about 400 interns assembled in the Loy Henderson Auditorium July 18 for the Department's 2006 Intern Summit.

DG Staples said that transformational diplomacy is putting more State employees in more difficult situations in developing countries. The issues are also different from those of the Cold War years, he added: transnational terrorism, money laundering and health issues, such as avian flu. And there is more emphasis on public outreach, he said, since foreign audiences need to understand American values and goals.

He told the interns to network, find out what State careers are like and determine if they have a thirst for travel and an interest in foreign cultures and languages.

The interns also heard from Foreign Service and Civil Service panelists about possible career paths and talked to bureau representatives who staffed displays in the hallway outside the auditorium.



*Director General George Staples addresses the Intern Summit.*



# Fellowship Program Cements Transatlantic Relations

Secretary Condoleezza Rice and European Affairs Assistant Secretary Dan Fried hosted a June 14 ceremony honoring five European participants in the 2005/2006 Transatlantic Diplomatic Fellowship exchange program.

Ambassadors of 27 European states and the European Commission attended the program's 10th anniversary ceremony in the Loy Henderson Room. This year's par-

ticipants hailed from Austria, France, Germany, Portugal and Slovenia.

In her remarks, Secretary Rice said the TDF fellows gained insights into the mysteries of foreign policymaking in Washington while working "on some of our most cutting-edge issues, including Korea, Belarus, Haiti and crisis management."

U.S. and European leaders created this exchange among foreign affairs agencies to

allow their young diplomats to work together and learn from each other. Each year, five or six mid-level U.S. diplomats and their EU- and NATO-member-state counterparts serve up to one year as a TDF fellow and then go on to serve a regular tour in their country's embassy in the same capital.

"When I was picked for this program, I had no idea I would be working on so many different issues with so many different colleagues throughout the U.S. government," said German Fellow Thomas Eckert. "I will benefit from this experience for the rest of my career."

"The fellowship program transforms one from an observer to an insider. It's so much easier to understand how a certain policy is set when you are directly involved in its creation," said Andrej Berginc, Slovenian fellow.

Over the last decade, the program has built a cadre of more than 100 diplomats in the U.S. and Europe who share a common commitment to closer transatlantic relations. European fellows during 2006-07 will come from France, Germany, the European Commission and, for the first time, Lithuania and Poland.

In August, the Department was planning to announce TDF opportunities for U.S. diplomats for summer 2007.



Assistant Secretary Dan Fried, left, poses with fellows Andrej Berginc of Slovenia, Andreas Brandstaetter of Austria, Secretary Rice, Thomas Eckert of Germany, Jose Antonio Galaz of Portugal and Antoine Michon of France.

## New Unit Provides Financial Services to Dangerous Posts

The Distressed Post Support Unit is a pilot program established in response to the under secretary for management's desire to relocate all possible non-location-specific financial services support performed in dangerous posts to safer environments.

The goals of the program are to reduce both American and Locally Engaged Staff presence in a dangerous area while providing post-level financial support and maintaining strict internal controls. DPSU support extends beyond danger posts to posts with unique circumstances, from emergency evacuation to political unrest.

In October 2005, Margaret Genco was appointed interim director and charged with establishing the service center with eight staff members located at Global Financial Services-Charleston and GFS-Bangkok. Don Simmons became director of the DPSU in May. Each of the eight staff members and two alternate certifying officers has many years of experience providing service to embassies around the world.

The pilot mission was to provide off-shore support for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, a mission supporting more than 3,000 employees from multiple U.S. government agencies. Today, the DPSU is a successful virtual extension of the Baghdad Financial Management Office, providing a full range of financial support services.

DPSU support is slated to expand this summer to the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli and is under consideration by other posts.

Each post decides which services it wants to receive. It retains total control of its funds and uses the DPSU to augment its staff. Alternatively, a post may choose to have the DPSU perform as its only financial management staff under the direction of the post management officer, thereby saving on costs associated with LE Staff. Posts can choose to retain certifying authority or pass the responsibility to the two DPSU certifying officers.

The DPSU, under the direction of James Millette, deputy assistant secretary, Global Financial Services, and the supervision of Charles Grover, deputy director, RM/GFS, is a successful step forward in the Department's regionalization mission.



Jane Scott Norris, chief information security officer for IRM's Office of Information Assurance, was the keynote speaker for the 2005 Cyber Security Awareness Month kick-off event.

## Month-long Program to Highlight Cyber Security

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security, in conjunction with Information Resource Management's Office of Information Assurance, will sponsor the Department's second annual Cyber Security Awareness Month.

Beginning September 28 with the kick-off event and fair day in the Dean Acheson Auditorium and the Exhibit Hall, this month-long event features industry professionals from the federal and private sectors discussing topics designed to educate, inform and demonstrate to the entire Department user community why cyber security awareness is important.

For more information on Cyber Security Awareness Month, go to: <http://cs.ds.state.gov/awarenessmonth.cfm>.

## State Has Three Finalists for Service Awards

On June 20, Director General George Staples announced that three Department of State employees have been named as finalists for the 2006 Service to America Medals, a national awards program to honor the achievements of federal employees.

Ambassador Nancy Powell (Homeland Security Medal), Political Military Officer Matthew Lowe (Call to Service Medal) and Special Assistant Christina Sanford (Call to Service Medal) are three of the 30 national finalists for the awards.

Ambassador Powell led key diplomatic efforts to organize international preparations for an avian flu pandemic. Mr. Lowe

played a critical role in laying the groundwork for the historic agreement between the United States and India on nuclear energy. Ms. Sanford served as chief of the legal office at the U.S. Embassy in Iraq and provided critical support for Iraq's democratically elected government.

Nine Service to America Medal awardees will be announced at a dinner and awards ceremony in Washington on Sept. 27.

Service to America Medals were created in 2002 by the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to recruiting and retaining excellence in the federal civil service, and Atlantic Media Company.

# STATE

M A G A Z I N E

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WRITER/EDITOR

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David L. Johnston  
ART DIRECTOR

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State Magazine (ISSN 1099-4165) is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the U.S. Department of State, 2201 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing locations.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Send changes of address to State Magazine, 2401 E Street, N.W., SA-1, Room H-236, Washington, D.C. 20522-0108. You may also e-mail address changes to [statemagazine@state.gov](mailto:statemagazine@state.gov).

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

State Magazine is available by subscription through the U.S. Government Printing Office by telephone at (202) 512-1800 or on the web at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

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The submission deadline for the November 2006 issue is September 15. The deadline for the December 2006 issue is October 15.



# The Changing Workplace

Looking at the problems we may face in the future, including the threat of a pandemic flu, it is imperative that we be prepared and flexible in how we maintain our Department functions—both in Washington and around the world—without compromising people's safety or health. Establishing proactive telework capabilities now can help us deal with emergencies if they arise.

The Department is currently investing in mobile computing technologies, especially through wireless PDAs (BlackBerries) and remote system access via ONE (OpenNet Everywhere). Our Information Resource Management colleagues have devised a way for employees worldwide to access ONE. All you need to get started is a computer with a high-speed Internet connection and a ONE system "fob." The fob device produces a self-generated password to enter State's gateway, where you can log on and securely access your ONE e-mail, calendar, contacts and computer files on the sensitive but unclassified system.

Overseas deployment of access to ONE from remote locations is under way. Currently, 742 users in 116 locations overseas are using ONE. A few months ago, this innovative program was put to a different use. One day in Karachi when it was unsafe for employees to

The telework candidate is a self-motivated, fully trained employee with ratings that are fully successful or above. Both the supervisor and the employee must sign an agreement indicating the hours of telework and arrangements for availability by phone and e-mail. In most cases teleworkers will get a fob, which

provides access to ONE. It is important to keep in mind that while telework is an option to help reduce the pressure of competing family life issues, it is not a substitute for child care or elder care.

The Office of Personnel Management is urging agencies to make better use of telework as one of the many tools to address the demands of the 21st century workforce. Department managers will be asked to lead this effort. Managing by results will include gaining comfort with teleconferencing and other tools.

Excellent communication between supervisor and employee is critical. Working

together, they can organize and structure the workload, setting performance expectations and parameters for telework arrangements.

The Department is in a unique position to show leadership in telework. In a sense, we have always done it as we manage a worldwide workforce and deal with



“The Office of Personnel Management is urging agencies to make better use of telework as one of the many tools to address the demands of the 21st Century workforce.”

travel from their residences to the consulate, the enterprising staff worked remotely from their homes.

In the last year, we have made significant progress in broadening our telework program in Washington, increasing from approximately 225 participants in 2004 to more than 2,000 in 2006. Work tasks rather than job titles are used to determine suitability for telework. Employees who do not require regular daily access to classified information or have responsibilities that require face-to-face contact to deliver a public service are excellent candidates for the telework program.

emerging issues as a united team over great distances and many time zones. At the same time, because diplomacy is our business, we know the value of face-to-face meetings and the importance of good communication. We can learn to balance both skills.

I urge both employees and managers to take a hard look at telework as an effective “management by results” tool. I am sure taking these bold steps forward, together we will make the State Department a quality organization for today and tomorrow.

If you have any suggestions, please send them via e-mail to “DG Direct.” ■

# State's Best Friends

BILINGUAL CANINES SNIFF OUT POTENTIAL DANGERS **BY DARLENE KIRK**

Ever wish that lazy pooch of yours would quit snoozing on the sofa, take some initiative and get a job, bring home some bacon and make something of himself? Some very special and talented canines, employed by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, have done just that. These four-legged "employees" are highly skilled, play an important role in our security and, yes, like many of us, are bilingual.

After years of using explosive detection dogs from other law enforcement agencies and the Department of Defense, DS created its own canine program in December 2002, attached to the Office of Domestic Operations, Uniformed Protection Division. Each canine team is composed of a dog and a uniformed security officer trained as an explosive ordnance detection dog handler.

The dogs are selected based on their display of a strong "hunt desire" and sharpen their skills during many months of intensive training under the guidance of a kennel-master. They are then matched with a handler, and the teams undergo a month's training together. The dogs at the Department include Labradors, Belgian Malinois, part Rhodesian Ridgeback and a Shiba Inu.

## Single Mission

A kennel in the Midwest that trains and provides dogs for police departments and government agencies around the world preselected these dogs for the State Department. The highly competitive handler selection process produces only the most qualified uniformed protection officers to travel to the kennel site to build rapport with the dogs. The officers are matched with the dogs according to personality. Each dog-handler team then undergoes advanced training together. Finding explosive devices is their only mission.

The EOD teams train for every type of explosive scenario possible. The dogs have been trained to detect odors from a wide variety of explosives. They have an extensive list of duties: sweeping all delivery trucks coming into the Harry S Truman building, conducting random sweeps of the perimeter, checking unattended packages and working off-site on DS protective details and at local hotels where dignitaries will stay. The dogs spend nearly all day working outside and are given regular breaks as recommended by the kennel and at the handler's discretion.

Every positive hit is treated as a real threat and the origin of that hit is investigated. In one instance, the duty dog flagged a truck that had been used to deliver pyrotechnics to a non-DOS facility. During a later delivery at Main State, the dog detected the lingering scent of

the fireworks and alerted its handler. The origin investigation ensures that the dogs are correct in their actions and are not having false hits.

If the dogs detect any scent of explosives, they are trained to be passively alert. Once a positive signal is given, the location is secured and the explosive ordnance disposal technicians are called in. Although their job may be done, the dogs will not move from the site until rewarded with their favorite toy. This reward method is used for training successes and was adopted in lieu of using food, which tends to make the animals too excitable. The toy reward is a motivation that keeps them working.

## Continuing Education

Each team is required to do a minimum of eight hours' training monthly, but the Department's dog teams receive much more. They conduct daily in-service training using live and drop aids. The trainer will place a small amount of inert explosive material in an area and allow the dog to find it and be rewarded. The dogs are certified quarterly by a nationally accredited kennel. The Department also participates in interdepartmental training with other agencies in the area.

Each dog lives with its handler, who is required to keep the dog bathed, groomed, healthy and happy. They generally work a 40-hour week, rotating between assignments and rest. The teams spend so much time together that they know each other's body language, likes and dislikes—a critical element in explosives detection.

The dogs are fed a special diet for working dogs. Most learn their commands in a foreign language. This prevents someone other than the handler from issuing commands counter to what the handler wants the dog to do.

All the dogs in the State Department program are known for their friendly dispositions. Employees often greet the dogs by name. Jasper, a black Labrador, was featured in a Department training film. Ginger, the smallest of the dogs and a rare Japanese breed, has been featured three times on Japanese TV. The dogs always are one of the most popular events at Take Your Child to Work Day.

The dogs and their handlers will continue to train and bond as they protect the men and women of the Department every day. ■

*The author is a public affairs specialist with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.*

*Officer Greg Irving reattaches Sammy's leash after a successful check of a truck.*

---

*"Beauty without Vanity,  
Strength without Insolence,  
Courage without Ferocity,"*

*Lord Byron's just tribute to a dog*

---







*Above: Officer Nelson Alas helps Ozzie prepare to check the rear of a vehicle. Left: Sgt. Steven Thomas with Jasper heads the canine team at the Department. Below, left: Ginger inspects items in the back of a truck at the 21st Street loading dock. Below, right: Officer Raymond Cox and Bila examine manholes around the perimeter of the Harry S Truman building.*





*Locally employed commercial specialist Anselme Jaoriziky leads the way for the U.S. Mission rice harvest.*



# Diplomatic Harvest

EMBASSY SHOWS MADAGASCAR RICE FARMERS A DIFFERENT WAY **BY JOSHUA POOLE**

Last December, more than 60 U.S. Mission employees in Madagascar from five agencies, led by Ambassador James D. McGee, rolled up their pant legs, grabbed plates of rice seedlings and headed for the rice field. They spent the day transplanting rice in a field allocated for the embassy's use at the agricultural research center at the presidential palace.

"Not only can we help train government workers, provide funds for development projects, aid in good governance and assist the fight against HIV/AIDS," Ambassador McGee told a group of journalists, "we can also get our hands dirty and help show the farmers—80 percent of the population of this country—how they can boost their yields and improve their lives."

The project had been born earlier in 2005 during a visit by senior officials from

the U.S. Department of Agriculture. President Marc Ravalomanana enthusiastically accepted their informal proposal and offered one-third of a hectare of land—about .8 of an acre—for the mission's use.

The American community and local staff were eager to demonstrate the benefits of the new rice-growing technique called system of rice intensification. At the planting stage, the system involves starting with eight-day-old seedlings, allowing ample

spacing and using only one seedling per hill. Research indicates that yields could be easily doubled, and perhaps tripled, using SRI.

## **In the Field**

Thanks to the post's Public Affairs section, extensive press coverage showed the U.S. Mission team in the rice field. The Malagasy people were impressed that Americans cared enough about the development of their country to take part in the sacred and respected tradition of rice cultivation. Rice is Madagascar's staple food and an integral part of Malagasy culture.

Over the five-month rice cycle, the U.S. Mission team helped to maintain the field, assisting in the frequent weeding and proper water control, two aspects of the SRI technique that allow for increased





*Above: Ambassador James McGee, left, looks on as Madagascar President Marc Ravalomanana, right, harvests rice from the American field and distributes it to enthusiastic Malagasy students. Left: Political/Economic Chief Brian Neubert looks down the line and organizes the rope to keep the seedlings in straight rows.*



aeration of the soil and less competition between weeds and the rice plant. With a generous donation from USDA, the team was able to purchase several hand-powered rotary-cone weeders to facilitate this work. The weeders cut labor time in half and made this often-difficult task much easier.

On April 28, Ambassador McGee again led his team into the field to harvest what they had sown four months earlier. They harvested the plot by hand with sickles to show farmers that heavy machinery and expensive inputs are not necessary. Ambassador McGee told a group of reporters that this technique should be easy for the Malagasy farmers, who are hard-working and skilled. He said they could undoubtedly do better than his group of office workers.

“Madagascar needs to take advantage of this technique to increase productivity, reduce production costs, protect the environment by encouraging an alternative to slash-and-burn

agriculture and promote consumers’ health through the reduction of chemical substances used in farming practices,” he said.

Adding to the festive scene, which was widely covered by the media, were visits from President Marc Ravalomanana; the minister of agriculture; members of the country’s military, nongovernmental organizations and international organizations and even school students, who helped the tired Americans carry some of their harvest.

### Huge Yields

The embassy plot yielded two tons of rice. Extrapolated to a full hectare, the yield would have reached six tons, more than three times the national average using traditional techniques.

President Ravalomanana and Ambassador McGee agreed to give the embassy rice harvest to charity. So the day after the harvest, members of the team loaded bags on a giant truck destined for Akany Avoko, a girls’ orphanage in the capital city of Antananarivo. This gesture brought smiles to the girls’ faces.

The months of hard work paid off. Farmers around the island saw an excellent example of how to improve their lives. The Malagasy government saw how the U.S. Mission was prepared to lead with a creative approach. Mission employees got to actually work in the fields and learn about this special Malagasy tradition. Finally, all the girls at the orphanage will have heaping plates of rice for many months to come. ■

*The author is the ambassador’s special programs manager in Madagascar.*

*A red marine iguana surveys its domain from a rock in Ecuador's Galápagos National Park.*





**'The Center of the World'**

# Guayaquil

By Megan Meyer and Lisa Burns





*Top left: The Rotonda monument on the Malecón depicts the historic meeting of Simon Bolívar and José de San Martín in 1822. Bottom: Downtown Santa Ana hill is a colorful example of the city's recent renovation. Above: The Inca ruins of Ingapirca are only a few hours from Guayaquil.*

The U.S. Consulate in Ecuador is located in the port city of Guayaquil, the commercial center and most populous city in the country. The consulate is downtown, where employees literally feel the pulse of city life. The warm and inviting guayaquileños, as the local citizens are called, are known for their relaxed, friendly attitude and truly enhance daily life at post.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of working in Guayaquil is the sense of witnessing a true urban revitalization. The city is undergoing a major renovation, with renewal projects visible everywhere.

The flagship project is the Malecón 2000, a striking boardwalk and park along the Guayas River that serves as the centerpiece for the city. One can spend hours strolling and indulging in its culinary pleasures, visiting historic monuments and enjoying the colorful gardens. During the early morning hours, joggers take advantage of the Malecón's exercise areas as they watch the sun rise over the river. The Malecón also boasts South America's first IMAX theater, which provides entertainment and education for children and adults.

Past the Malecón sits Santa Ana hill, home to the Las Peñas neighborhood that represents the city's historic past, charming present and promising future. Although climbing the 456 stairs of Santa Ana may seem daunting, the coffee shops, art galleries and majestic views of the city along the way make the ascent worthwhile. At night, Santa Ana teems with locals and tourists who meet on the steps to enjoy dinner, live music and dancing. The

nearby crafts market features local artesanal treasures, from painted pottery to alpaca shawls, at bargain prices.

One of the city's newest renovations is the Malecón Salado, another riverfront promenade perfect for enjoying a cold shrimp ceviche and watching the paddleboats at sunset.

In the city's beautiful Iguana Park, one can indeed see iguanas, but employees can see them at home, as well, sunning themselves in the backyard.

### History of the Consulate

Ecuador is much more than a tourist attraction. It has lived up to its title of "The Center of the World," serving as a long standing nexus of friendship between North and South America. The U.S. Consulate General has played an essential role in this relationship.

The consulate is the United States' oldest in the Western Hemisphere and remains the only consulate on the Pacific coast of South America. The Monroe Doctrine of 1822 inspired the leaders of the region to establish diplomatic relations with the U.S. The Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Navigation and Commerce in 1825 led to the consular appointment of William Wheelwright to Guayaquil. The port city grew in importance throughout the 19th century, and the consulate was upgraded to a consulate general in 1884.

Of the 60 principal consuls who have served here, one of the most famous is Thomas Nast, known as the father of modern political cartoons. In fact, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Nast in 1902 partly because he attributed his early interest in politics to Nast's cartoons. Unfortunately, Nast succumbed to

yellow fever only six months after his arrival. Yellow fever remained a serious obstacle to the development of Guayaquil until the disease was finally controlled in the 1920s.

Guayaquil has continued to endure hardships over the past century, including citywide fires, corruption, safety issues and political unrest. Nevertheless, an assignment there can be extremely rewarding.

Guayaquil has become a family-oriented post, and many of the new arrivals are newlyweds with young children. A special sense of community exists within the consulate, as it is small enough for an employee to know everyone's name yet large enough to provide diversity.

The consular staff has grown steadily and makes up a large portion of the post's staff. The increasing number of non-immigrant visa applicants each year reflects the strength of the consulate's ties to Guayaquil.

The fraud prevention unit stays busy. Fraud is frequently encountered in the consular district because of the pull factor of more than two million Ecuadorians living in the U.S. The American Citizen Services Section is very active and is particularly concerned with the number of citizens arrested on drug charges.

Guayaquil's importance to U.S. interests was underscored by the Department's decision to add a public affairs officer position to the post as part of the Global Repositioning Initiative of the Secretary's transformational diplomacy efforts.

The Drug Enforcement Administration office is small in comparison with those in surrounding countries, but is remarkably effective. Sandwiched between Peru and Colombia, two of the largest producers and exporters of cocaine, Ecuador is often used as a transit route. Working closely with the Narcotics Affairs Section and Tactical Analysis Team, DEA works with Ecuadorian authorities to train officers in drug detection, arrest procedures and proper destruction of seized substances. Over the past two years, DEA's task force has increased the number of initiated cases by approximately 130 percent.

### Weekend Excursions

While there is an abundance of things to do in the city itself, many employees assigned to Guayaquil agree that one of the greatest advantages of living here is the proximity to many other extraordinary places. Ecuador is ideal for an adventure

## AT A GLANCE



### Country name

Ecuador

### Capital

Quito

### Government

Republic

### Independence

May 24, 1822 (from Spain)

### Population

13.5 million

### Languages

Spanish (official) and Amerindian languages (especially Quechua)

### Religions

Mainly Roman Catholic

### Total area

283,560 square kilometers

### Approximate size

Slightly smaller than Nevada

### Currency

U.S. dollar (USD)

### Per capita income

\$4,300

### Population below poverty line

41 percent

### Imports

Vehicles, medicinal products and telecommunications equipment

### Exports

Petroleum, bananas and flowers

SOURCE: CIA World Factbook 2006





*Top: The Guayaquil Immigrant Visa section handles immigrant visas for all of Ecuador. Standing, from left, are Gabriela Grunauer, Miriam Cordero, Annabelle Altamirano, Elly Martinez and Veronica Ladd. Seated are Diana Vela and Andres Macias. Bottom: Tranquil beaches provide a relaxing getaway from the city. Right: The road to Cuenca rises above the clouds, providing spectacular scenery.*

lover, with a variety of climates and terrain within a small geographical area. About the size of Nevada, Ecuador boasts four distinct areas: the Galápagos Islands, the amazon jungle, the highlands with their snow-covered volcanic peaks and the coastal tropics, where Guayaquil is located.

Several beaches are just a few hours' drive from the city and consulate staff members make weekend getaways to enjoy the surf, sun and fresh seafood. Lodging choices range from lavish resort hotels to rustic, secluded beach bungalows. Employees also can visit

the famous Galápagos Islands, which are part of the Guayaquil consular district, to enjoy unsurpassed animal and bird watching, diving, snorkeling and hiking.

For those who thrive at higher altitudes, Ecuador's highlands region offers mountain adventures. One of the most popular highland towns is Cuenca, a colonial city that has been named a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Heritage Site. The trip there is half the fun. The four-hour drive from Guayaquil involves a climb of more than 10,000 feet and is

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ABOVE): HELENE TULING; (OPPOSITE PAGE): ELIZABETH COOK, HELENE TULING AND JILL JOHNSON



replete with waterfall views and close encounters with grazing llamas. The Incan ruins of Ingapirca are within a short drive from Cuenca and are some of the most well-preserved ruins in South America.

Breathtaking mountaintop views in the country's capital, Quito, can make a business trip to the U.S. Embassy feel like a vacation. Only a 40-minute plane ride away, Quito, a bustling city in an Andean mountain valley, has a culture remarkably different from that of the coastal regions. A short drive from downtown Quito leads to the popular tourist

attraction La Mitad del Mundo, the exact latitudinal center of the earth. Because there is no centrifugal force on the equator line, water flows straight down a drain.

A tour in Guayaquil offers the opportunity to explore a stunning and diverse small country while serving in a fast-paced, ever-changing large city. ■

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*The authors were interns at the U.S. Consulate in Guayaquil. They were assisted by Helene Tuling, the consulate's political-economic officer.*

*Top: Colorful artisan goods reflect the culture of the region. Middle: Karen Smith, deputy consular chief and fraud protection manager, discusses a case with investigators Mariela Vargas and Paul Abril. Bottom: The Galápagos Islands are in the Guayaquil consular district and offer a once-in-a-lifetime wildlife viewing opportunity.*



*Postal inspector Greg Staisiunas, center, trains mail clerk Gytis Keras and telephone operator Violeta Jefremova.*



## LITHUANIA GETS FIRST MODULAR MAIL-SCREENING UNIT **BY MICHAEL CHRISTENSEN**

Suspicious envelopes and packages arrive with unfortunate regularity at U.S. diplomatic posts around the world. Most are innocuous, but some contain written threats, unknown powders or liquids or even dead animals.

Since the late 2001 anthrax incidents in the United States, diplomatic posts have developed procedures to prescreen mail outside of the main mission building before distribution. Embassies have variously used storage containers, makeshift storage sheds or rooms with slab-to-slab

construction and their own ventilation systems to protect employees and prevent incidents from affecting offices and post operations.

Because evacuation and shutdown of mission facilities are possible when an unknown substance is found, the advantages of establishing a designated mail-screening facility external to the main building are obvious. So the director for the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations, General Charles Williams, directed his staff to engineer a modular

mail-screening facility to protect employees and operations and deal with threats and hoaxes in a place remote from consulate and chancery buildings.

The first such facility began operation at the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius, Lithuania, on May 18.

"This project came along at just the right time," said post Management Officer Cheryl Johnson. "Our embassy was in the process of drawing up plans and getting quotes to outfit a screening facility in an empty garage on the compound. The con-

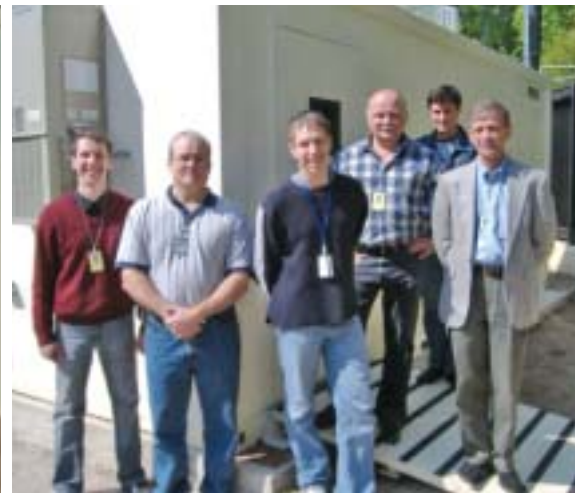
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“Our embassy was in the process of drawing up plans and getting quotes to outfit a screening facility in an empty garage on the compound. The container solves our problem and does so at very little cost to post.”

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*Above: Back row, from left, U.S. Postal Inspection Service inspector Greg Staisiunas joins mail clerk Gytis Keras, charge d'affaires Thomas Kelly, information management officer Demian LaMadrid and post management officer Cheryl Johnson, front, in touring the new facility. Top Right: Local Vilnius staffers, from left, Marius Masiulis, Charles M. Suhr, Mindaugas Sereiva, Romualdas Skirgaila, Gytis Keras and Andre Krol pose outside the screening facility. Bottom: The turnkey mail screening facility protects employees and the post from possible contamination.*



tainer solves our problem and does so at very little cost to post.”

OBO's mail-screening facility design provides maximum protection of post employees, containment of any contaminants and, if required, easy decontamination. In the event of severe contamination, the facility can easily be sealed, removed and replaced.

Following screening, the post mail-room sorts and distributes the mail as in the past.

A key feature of the modular mail-screening facility is the biological safety cabinet, a biological and chemical “hood” that protects employees and the post from potential contamination. The same type of equipment is used to protect workers in hospitals, pharmaceutical manufacturing and the chemical industry. In the event of an incident, the biological safety cabinet contains suspected contaminants until a laboratory analysis is conducted and the facility is sealed.

Inspector Greg Staisiunas of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service traveled to Vilnius to conduct mail-screening training for post staff and evaluate the new facility.

He said the installation “is just the beginning of a much larger development effort for State and the Postal Service to protect our employees, customers and operations.”

OBO is gearing up for a rapid worldwide distribution of the new units and anticipates great demand from diplomatic posts, which have struggled with various ad hoc approaches to external mail screening. General Williams has authorized George Glavis, chief of OBO's Mechanical Engineering Branch, to provide up to 50 mail-screening facilities in 2007 and another 50 in 2008 to embassies and consulates around the world. ■

*The author is a mechanical engineer with the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations.*





India's leading Muslim educators and leaders expressed their views at the conference held in Raichak, West Bengal, in April.

# BREACHING WALLS

U.S. ENGAGES INDIAN MUSLIMS IN DIALOGUE OF VALUES **BY BHASKAR RAJAH**

U.S. public diplomacy officers are working hard to promote a dialogue of values involving Muslims around the world. India's Muslim population of 140 million is the second largest in the world. With that in mind, public affairs sections at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and consulates in Calcutta, Chennai and Mumbai teamed up recently to bring 75 Islamic leaders from across India under one roof for mutual trust-building.

The April conference in Raichak, West Bengal, was a great success, with much sharing of ideas and a chance for everyone to speak frankly to a respectful audience.

The conference, funded through a grant from the Bureau of South and Central Asia Affairs, was titled "Perspectives on Islamic Education in the 21st Century." It brought

together Muslim Indians who had traveled to the U.S. during the past four years on Department-sponsored exchange programs. Experts on Islam from the U.S. were invited, along with Americans who could converse in Urdu, including Foreign Service officers Adnan Siddiqi, Jon Dorschner, Ravi Candadai and Saad

Bokhari, all of whom are posted in India. The U.S. Consulate in Calcutta arranged for simultaneous interpretation in Urdu, English and Bengali.

Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding fellow Zahid Bukhari and University of Vermont Fulbright professor and professor of religion Sufia Uddin shared their academic and personal perspectives on Islam in the U.S. and religious education in general. The speakers at the five remaining sessions were Indian Muslim participants.

## Mutual Interests

Issues of mutual interest were explored, information on practices and strategies for

educational and economic development shared and areas of future cooperation identified. Discussion focused on everyday concerns, laying the foundation for progressive action in cooperation with the Muslim community. The emphasis by Secretary Condoleezza Rice and Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes on the need for “dialogue, not monologue” was reinforced by the conference.

India’s Muslim leaders voiced their thoughts directly and frankly to U.S. government representatives. A remarkably high number of Muslim speakers advocated liberalizing and modernizing Islamic education. The strength of this conference lay in its focus on the broad goal of Islamic education, while including differing regional and ideological perspectives within each session. Reflecting on their International Visitor program experiences, a number of participants said they retained positive images of U.S. teaching methodologies, universal education and the use of technology, which they have been transmitting to their schools and communities.

The conference helped promote a positive image of the U.S., particularly among conservative clerics who rarely see any

Americans, and provided an opportunity for Muslim women participants to voice their concerns.

### Breaking Barriers

By opening and closing the conference with verses from the Koran, timing administrative breaks to coincide with the call to prayer and providing a separate room and

A screening of *It’s a Wonderful Life*, starring Jimmy Stewart, showed U.S. family values. The cultural highlight was a three-hour Urdu-language “mushaira” (poetry reading), in which some of the most strident critics of the U.S. broke into poetry, song and banter, and applauded mission officers who recited American poetry verses in English and Urdu.

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ablution facilities, organizers showed appropriate respect for Islam. They also arranged a group photo shoot to break down barriers, not only between Americans and Indian Muslims, but also between different religious ideologies within India.

One participant noted that “only the U.S. Embassy could have brought us all together under one roof.”

Participants urged the mission to hold such conferences annually, and suggested expanding them to include non-Muslim Indians, a true sea change in attitude from the first mission conference held with madrasa leaders in Hyderabad in July 2004. ■

*The author is assistant public affairs officer at the U.S. Consulate in Calcutta.*



*Dr. Anees Ahmed Shakeel Ahmed Chishti, center, an educator and writer from Pune, Maharashtra, makes a point at the conference.*



# Language Barrier



Most days, the interpreters in the Office of Language Services can be found next to the Secretary of State assisting her in bilateral consultations with her foreign counterparts or traveling with the President to foreign capitals to deliver America's message in the many languages of the world. The translators of LS are usually in their offices in SA-1 sweating over questions of terminology in connection with free trade agreements or translating e-mail traffic that might contain information about terrorist activities.

Recently, however, the office's interpreters and translators got the opportunity to apply their superb language skills to a project that is far removed from the high drama of international politics and national security. They helped ordinary people who find themselves in very difficult circumstances: cancer patients at Inova Fairfax Hospital who do not understand English.

STATE TRANSLATORS  
HELP EASE CANCER  
PATIENTS' ANXIETY

**BY MARTA ZIELYK**



It all started when I got the chance to do a one-year course at the National Defense University. One of my classmates was an Air Force colonel whose wife, Lisa Cawthorne, is an oncology nurse educator with the Life with Cancer Program at Inova Cancer Center in Fairfax.

### Language Challenge

During one social get-together, Lisa described her frustration with the language barrier that often exists between her patients and her. She explained that Fairfax County is the fourth most diverse area in the United States and that this presents unusual challenges for Inova Fairfax in dealing with patients who have recently arrived from countries where Arabic, Farsi, Vietnamese, Korean and other languages are spoken.

However, she added, the frustration level of educators comes nowhere near the frustration level of patients. Most Americans never know how frightening it is not knowing what to expect, how to care for yourself or when to call a doctor. Lisa said she dreamed of the day when all the materials about care after a cancer diagnosis would be available in the native languages of her patients.

Well it took me only about a second to tell Lisa that my colleagues happen to be highly skilled language experts who were more than qualified to deal with technical medical terminology. Furthermore, I was confident that they would be willing to help.

The following day, with the blessing of our office director, Brenda Sprague, I asked my fellow interpreters and translators to volunteer their services to translate several oncology teaching sheets into as many languages as possible. Within minutes I had enthusiastic responses from my Arabic, Korean, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, French, Russian and Farsi colleagues. I volunteered to do the translation into Ukrainian.

### After Hours

And so for the next few weeks, in between our regular duties and on our own time, my colleagues and I translated documents titled "Thrombocytopenia: when your platelets are low," "Neutropenia: when your neutrophils are very low," "Anemia: when your red blood cells are very low" and others into 10 languages and presented them to Inova Fairfax. Many colleagues told me that helping cancer patients deal with the daily trauma of their illness with clear, concise information in their native language was very rewarding.

Lisa was effusive in her thanks. Soon after receiving our translations, she wrote: "In my culture and religion, your gift would require a 'Hallelujah Chorus' standing on top of the highest mountain. I wish you could see the grateful faces of patients and their family members when they receive information in their native language. You provided a way to improve their quality of life through knowledge, control of their own care and decreasing their anxiety."

Lisa feels that gifts should be shared, so the translations, in addition to being handed out to patients at the Inova Fairfax Hospital Cancer Center, were also posted on the hospital web site to enable cancer patients all over the United States and in other countries to benefit from this information. ■

MOST AMERICANS  
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*Opposite page: Nurses Eric Cohen and Lisa Cawthorne review the chemotherapy teaching sheets for patient Krikor Krikorian. Mr. Krikorian got the sheets in his native language, Arabic, and his daughter-in-law received them in Russian. Above: Janet Tan, left, a Chinese translator in Language Services, discusses her volunteer work with author Marta Zielyk.*

*The author is a senior diplomatic interpreter in the Office of Language Services.*





*With a twist of unintended irony, the pile of Janjaweed weapons grew on top of an old U.S. Agency for International Development tarp.*

# A Farewell to Arms

BEARING WITNESS TO ONE SMALL STEP TO PEACE IN DARFUR **BY ANDREW STEINFELD**

We departed Khartoum airport at dawn on June 23 aboard one of those odd-looking Antonovs with the jet engines hanging high on the wings. The diplomatic delegation to the disarmament ceremony was small: the British defense attaché, a member of our Defense Liaison Office and me.

After a brief stop in South Darfur's capital, Nyala, we continued by a Sudan Armed Forces helicopter to the town of Kass. This was one of those white-painted helicopters about which the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum had often protested to the government as constituting a violation of normal humanitarian practice; military aircraft are not supposed to be painted white. A 20-minute drive in the bush brought us to the tiny village of Dawis.

There, in a small clearing, hundreds of people had already gathered. As we entered, 150 or so Janjaweed Arab militia members stood to the left, behind a rope. They were holding automatic rifles they were soon to turn over to the government. At the other side of the clearing stood about the same number of women, clad in the vividly bright colored fabrics typical of Darfur. Bright-eyed and excited children milled about. Some spectators were hidden in the trees, while others sat on grazing camels.

In the shade at one end of the clearing were seats for the VIPs: Magzoub al-Khalifa, chief government negotiator in Abuja and senior adviser to Sudan's President Bashir; the wali (governor) of South Darfur; a slew of senior military offi-

cials; African Union and United Nations representatives; and, off to the side in a secondary position, three chairs for the U.K. and U.S. representatives.

Most notably, in the middle of the clearing lay an old U.S. Agency for International Development tarp. Apparently, the Janjaweed weapons were going to be laid there.

## Yes to Peace

The ceremony opened with a Janjaweed militiaman declaring that they were giving up all their weapons to join the community and implement the Darfur Peace Agreement. He then stated the Janjaweed's requirements, which included integration of some of them into the armed forces and intelligence organs of the Government of





*Above: From left, author Andrew Steinfeld observes the ceremony with United Kingdom defense attaché Col. Tim Watts, an unidentified United Nations official and Daniel Riggs from the U.S. Defense Liaison Office. Right: The women of Darfur expressed their joy at the small step toward peace. Below: About 150 Janjaweed Arab militia turned in their arms at the small village of Dawis.*



National Unity, provision of vehicles, building of primary and secondary schools and rehabilitation of public facilities.

Senior government officials, including the wali, a senior army officer and Magzoub al-Khalifa, made the following points:

- “No to war, yes to peace. No to destruction, yes to reconstruction.” The crowd was invited to mimic the speaker.
- All arms should be surrendered to the Sudan armed forces.
- Amnesty would be declared for the Janjaweed, but only for crimes committed against the government, not against individuals.
- Quick and strong efforts would be made by the wali and other government organizations to reintegrate the Janjaweed back into the fabric of society. Rapid action on educational and health services was also promised.
- Only the African Union has a role in peace agreement implementation. The people of Sudan have made it clear they do not welcome any other troops. (This

was a reference to the debate about transition from AU to U.N. peacekeeping in Darfur.)

### **The Surrendering of Arms**

In the middle of the speeches, observers were invited to move to the center of the clearing to witness the surrendering of arms. One by one, the Janjaweed approached the tarp and laid down their guns. Most were relatively new Kalashnikovs that looked to be in good working order. The militiamen, having surrendered their weapons, circled around the spectators, shaking hands and receiving the congratulations of the wali and Magzoub. When the ceremony ended, 150–200 automatic rifles lay glistening in the midday sun. The irony was poignant: Janjaweed weapons lying on a USAID tarp.

We were then invited to visit three desks nearby. The first was for the Janjaweed to register their weapons, the second to register personal identification data and the third, manned by a sincere young man clad

in a black jacket and sash reading “Sudan Judiciary,” to take an oath from the Janjaweed promising good behavior in return for amnesty.

With regard to the significance of this event, we could attest only to the fact that on June 23 approximately 150 automatic rifles were placed on the ground in a small village in South Darfur. The AU confirmed shortly afterward that they were placed under lock and key, and Magzoub said the government might destroy them at a later date. It is not clear how many more weapons the individuals who gave up these weapons might have. At the time, the AU had yet to receive the government’s Janjaweed disarmament plan, already overdue according to the peace agreement schedule.

Was this the first act in a comprehensive plan to disarm the militias or simply a show for the observers? ■

*The author was until recently the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum.*



*Dr. Calu of the USAID health team addresses audience at the Unilever plant.*



# 'The Play's the Thing'

EMBASSY THESPIANS FIGHT AIDS IN MOZAMBIQUE **BY LEYLA ONES**

Joao "Tamimo" Ali, a maintenance worker at the U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Maputo, Mozambique, began to notice the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS in his community about two years ago. Struck by the untimely deaths of some neighborhood residents and fellow churchgoers, Tamimo was determined to find out all he could about the deadly epidemic ravaging southern Africa.

"I was so curious that I began reading everything I could get my hands on," he said. "I wanted to share my knowledge with members of the community."

After starting informal counseling sessions in his own neighborhood, he saw the

opportunity to use more innovative outreach ideas. At a USAID staff meeting where plans for a July 2005 HIV/AIDS health fair were being discussed, Tamimo volunteered to create a theater group to present HIV/AIDS-related skits he had written in a uniquely Mozambican cultural context.

With a growing HIV/AIDS epidemic, Mozambique is one of the 15 focus countries under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and is receiving \$94 million for prevention, care and treatment programs this fiscal year.

The latest statistics are sobering: One of six Mozambicans aged 15 to 49 is HIV-positive; an estimated 500 people in that

same age range become infected daily. With only 650 physicians and a population of 19 million, the country is facing a grave health crisis.

## **Culture Changes**

"Certain Mozambican cultural practices clearly contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS," said Tamimo, "and I wanted a way to point this out to my co-workers."

The July 2005 presentation of Tamimo's skits by a group of USAID and Centers for Disease Control Locally Employed Staff was a huge success, fueling a dialogue about the importance of knowing one's serological status. Mission employees lined



*Tamino Ali, left, poses with other members of the theater group.*

up in great numbers at the health fair's on-site testing facility.

The skits touched on controversial themes such as delayed sexual debut (the average age to initiate sex is believed to be 16 in Mozambique), fidelity, the use of condoms in extramarital affairs and speaking with parents about sexual peer pressure.

Popular demand led to the group's second show in late November in honor of World AIDS Day. In his prelude, Tamimo urged mission audience members to go out to their own neighborhoods, churches, mosques and schools to continue sharing awareness and prevention messages in creative ways.

Following on the heels of a successful Mission Speakers Initiative that sent teams of employees out to Maputo-area high schools to discuss American culture, foreign policy and bilateral relations with Mozambique, a new idea was born: to capitalize on the theatrical talents of Locally Employed Staff by sending out the "HIV/AIDS Road Show" to Mozambican high-school and private-sector audiences.

The group's first presentation, held on March 3, unfolded in front of 55 high school students in the suburb of Matola. Among young couples, "proof of love" is a

common technique used to pressure young women into sexual initiation. The first skit presented the message powerfully by turning the tables: the young girl asked her boyfriend to wait as his proof of love. A comical interlude followed, as a mother and a father sat down with their teenage children to clumsily initiate a discussion of the risks of sexual intercourse and the importance of condom use.

### **Serious Questions**

After the conclusion of the skits, Clinic-to-Community HIV/AIDS Outreach Advisor Dr. Mussa Calu, a member of the USAID health team, answered questions that were unexpectedly technical in nature.

"The students were surprisingly well informed on the biology component of the virus, but it's clear that they need to focus on behavior change and female empowerment," she said.

Gender inequality is a serious issue in Mozambique, where it is often difficult for women to negotiate the terms of sex or turn down sex. The May 19 road show performance in front of 75 factory workers at the Unilever plant highlighted the problem. Men asked questions like "How can I have a child even if I'm HIV-

positive?" and "When can I stop using a condom with my girlfriend?" while the women's questions centered on asserting control over sexual choices.

One of Tamimo's skits emphasized the issue: A housewife cleaning out her husband's suitcase after his business trip finds condoms and refuses to be intimate with him until he's shown her the results of an HIV test. Smiles, laughter, pensive looks and applause from the audience were proof that the message had been received. Even more remarkably, Tamimo's sign-up sheet for Unilever employees interested in forming their own theatrical group filled up quickly.

Tamimo, Dr. Calu, Branca Cruz, Joana Coana, Euridia Azevedo, Leonardo Ricardo, Adriano Tivane, Silvia Fernandes, Samuel Dzimba and Joaquim Martins—the founding members of the road show—have all shown a remarkable commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Their personal examples demonstrate to their communities that through the steadfast efforts of a few, many and much can change. ■

*The author was until recently the economic/political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Maputo.*



# Educational Adventures

AMERICAN CULTURE INSPIRES LITHUANIAN STUDENTS **BY TREVOR BOYD**



Exchange programs serve as an important public diplomacy tool. The Summer Work and Travel Program, for example, at no cost to the American taxpayer, provides employment opportunities in service-oriented positions in the United States to thousands of foreign university students during their summer breaks. The program helps instill in them a better understanding of America.

Lithuania's program, one of the largest per capita in the world, sends 2,000 university students to more than 30 states each year. Placed primarily in service-oriented positions in tourist areas along the East Coast and Great Lakes, Lithuanians participate to improve language skills, learn about American culture and earn money for their studies.

To better understand the program's impact through the eyes of participants, the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius created and distributed a questionnaire to alumni from the 2003–2005 program years.

Students responded that the main reasons they participated were to improve language abilities, satisfy a sense of adventure and curiosity about America and earn money. Most came away impressed with the customer service-oriented, friendly nature of Americans and our "supersized" lifestyle. They said they returned to Lithuania more confident, self-sufficient and appreciative of the democratic ideals, cultural diversity and natural beauty of the United States.

One student said her experience at a special needs camp in Illinois will make her a better doctor by sensitizing her to the needs of the disabled. She hoped to apply some of the treatment and mainstreaming techniques she learned to Lithuania. Other participants cited diverse "best" experiences: halibut fishing in Alaska, attending a Buffalo Bills game, seeing the skyscrapers of New York City, visiting New Orleans jazz clubs and (from a computer science major) having the opportunity to eat lunch on the Google campus.

Some other participant comments:

"The national anthem began to play at the beginning of a game on TV. The man I was sitting with on the porch put down his glass, stood up, put his hand on his chest and said, 'You know, kids, that is our national anthem.' That was amazing. That's what makes me respect American culture. They taught me to love my country."

"Seeing Niagara Falls is something unbelievable. That is the memory that will always stay in my mind. Seeing the

power and greatness of it is something that you cannot experience watching movies or pictures."

"Americans do not complain about their problems like we do; they just solve the problems."

"I realized that I am a completely different person. I grew up and am no longer the naïve girl I was before going to the U.S. I am now self-confident. I can fight for myself and I know what I want from my life."

"I like the attitude of the citizens to the law."

Participants universally affirmed that the program gave them a distinct advantage over other graduates when seeking employment, observing that Lithuanian employers greatly value their American experience, particularly their exposure to a multinational culture, their language skills



*Through the Work and Travel Program, Lithuanian university students Ausrina Pociute, left, and Ieva Vaicikauskaite experienced firsthand the diversity of American culture.*

and familiarity with American corporate culture and management styles. Recent program alumni have secured leadership positions in both governmental and private institutions, such as chief legal specialist for the Vilnius city administration and consultant in an international management-consulting firm. ■

*The author, a vice consul, has left post for his next assignment in Yerevan, Armenia.*





# Stamps of Approval

SERIES HONORS LEGENDARY DIPLOMATS' PASSION FOR SERVICE **BY DR. AMY GARRETT**

On May 30, the U.S. Postal Service unveiled a commemorative stamp series, "Distinguished American Diplomats," posthumously honoring six accomplished Foreign Service officers. Hiram Bingham IV, Charles E. Bohlen, Philip C. Habib, Robert D. Murphy, Clifton R. Wharton Sr. and Frances E. Willis may not yet be household names, but their accomplishments and their profession were celebrated in style during a ceremony at the Washington 2006 World Philatelic Exhibition.

The official unveiling of this stamp series marked the culmination of years of effort

by relatives, State Department employees, the Postal Service, the American Foreign Service Association and Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired.

Obtaining approval for commemorative stamps is no simple task. The impetus to issue the "Distinguished American Diplomats" series began in the late 1990s when the friends and family of Hiram Bingham IV petitioned the Postal Service to issue a stamp in his memory.

David Failor, USPS executive director of Stamp Services, emphasized that nominations do not come from within the Postal Service. They come from

organizations, individuals or families, such as the Bingham, who petition the USPS Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee. The committee is made up of 15 members appointed by the postmaster general. According to committee member John Hotchner, the committee considers about 50,000 public requests for commemorative stamps each year. Of these, it recommends 25 subjects for commemoration.

## Broader Focus

Hotchner, a longtime State Department employee—he is a senior policy

officer in the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center—and an avid stamp collector, proposed that the committee broaden the focus of the original Bingham family proposal to create a series of stamps recognizing a broader group of professional diplomats.

A number of famous diplomats have already graced U.S. postage stamps, among them William Seward, George Marshall, John Quincy Adams and Ralph Bunche. However, these men were all non-career appointees and appeared on single issues. The “Distinguished American Diplomats” series recognizes six career diplomats and their profession in a pane of six 39-cent stamps.

These stamps mark the first time the Foreign Service profession has been recognized on U.S. postage. In Mr. Failor’s words, they celebrate “the broad impact of what diplomats do.” To identify the individual diplomats who could adequately represent varied and distinguished service to the United States and the international community, the advisory committee consulted AFSA and DACOR for nominations that would complement a Hiram Bingham IV stamp. Once the diplomats had been selected, the Department’s Office of the Historian assisted the committee by providing the professional backgrounds of the six honorees.

At the May 30 dedication ceremony, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Teresa Dean and Department Historian Dr. Marc Susser joined Postal Service officials and the audience in viewing a taped welcome by Secretary Condoleezza Rice. Chairman of the Postal Service Board of Governors James C. Miller III said the honorees “shared a common passion for service—a passion that sometimes put them in harm’s way. They took risks to advance humanitarianism. They took risks to advance ideas. They took risks to advance peace.”

### Charm and Dedication

Families of the six diplomats filled the first several rows of the audience. Their comments added a personal touch. Robert Kim Bingham believed his father “would be embarrassed by all the attention” he received for defying U.S. policy



Chairman of the Postal Service Board of Governors James C. Miller cited the six diplomats’ passion for service at the unveiling of the Distinguished American Diplomats commemorative stamp series.

by issuing visas to Jewish refugees in occupied France during World War II. All family members echoed this sentiment, especially Sherene Gravatte, great-niece of Frances Willis, the first female Foreign Service officer to rise through the ranks to become a career ambassador. Willis merely “wanted her actions to speak for themselves,” she said.



Aside from modesty, these diplomats shared other traits—charm and dedication. Avis Bohlen described her father, Soviet expert Charles Bohlen, as “a man of many talents” and “wonderful company.” Mildred Pond, whose father, Robert Murphy, served as the first postwar U.S. ambassador to Japan, spoke of him as “shrewd and san-

guine” with “an amazing capacity to look for solutions.” Clifton R. Wharton Jr. portrayed his father, Clifton R. Wharton Sr., the first black Foreign Service officer to rise through the ranks to become ambassador, as a man who “dedicated his life to serving the foreign policy of the United States.” Susan Michaels, daughter of Middle East peace negotiator Philip Habib, said simply that diplomacy was “a career my father loved.”

All family members agreed that, aside from the acknowledgment their relatives received, the value of this stamp series is that it celebrates the commitment and professionalism of career diplomats.

The Postal Service has issued a one-time printing of three million sheets of the “Distinguished American Diplomats” stamps. To obtain the collectable stamps, visit <http://www.usps.com/shop> or call 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724). ■

*The author is a historian in the Policy Studies Division of the Office of the Historian.*





# LEARNING HISTORY'S LESSONS

BY SUSAN K. HOLLY

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ABOVE) 7772; (OPPOSITE PAGE) 7777

You might expect that any office in the Department of State whose basic assignment dates back 145 years might be a little stuffy and set in its ways. But if you were talking about the Office of the Historian, you would be wrong.

Although the office traces its mandate back to President Lincoln in 1861, its work has changed just as much as the world has.

"A major job is still to compile *Foreign Relations of the United States*, which is the official documentary record of American foreign policy," explained Historian of the Department Dr. Marc J. Susser. "But I don't think that President Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward could ever have imagined what a huge job that would turn out to be."

Dr. Susser's historians comb through tens of thousands of documents for each volume of the *Foreign Relations* series. A single volume—and there have been more than 400 over the years—takes several years to produce. Today, those volumes include Department memos and telegrams, transcripts of presidential audio conversations and records from all agencies of the U.S. Government involved in foreign policy. No other department or agency publishes this type of official record.

### ACCURATE AND RELIABLE

"It's definitely harder than ever to compile an accurate, comprehensive account because there are so many players," Dr. Susser said. "And it's only going to get harder when we have to reconstruct a chain of events from e-mail messages."

His message for today's desk officers: "Preserve those e-mail messages—they're a big part of the official record."

Sometimes, the Office of the Historian has found itself on the front page of the *New York Times*, caught up in controversies over the release of volumes or the declassification of documents. Dr.

## Fast Facts: Office of the Historian

- >>> The office has about 40 historians, editors and declassification specialists. Most have PhDs.
- >>> *Foreign Relations of the United States* is the oldest continually published official documentary history in the world.
- >>> Each video title produced by the office has a potential audience of more than one million students.
- >>> The office handles hundreds of public inquiries per month through its [history@state.gov](mailto:history@state.gov) mailbox.
- >>> The office softball team, the Foggy Bottom Dwellers, proves that historians do go outside (sometimes).
- >>> No one ever beats the office at State Department trivia.

Susser notes that the congressional mandate governing the office requires that the official account be thorough, accurate and reliable. That can lead to major confrontations with other government agencies, and sometimes to protracted negotiations over words, phrases and even punctuation.

*Opposite page: Marc J. Susser, historian of the Department and office director, consults a volume of the Department's official series Foreign Relations of the United States. Left: General editor Ted Keefer and Melissa Jane Taylor. Below: Intern Andrea Peterson, left, joins Joyce Schimsky and Linda Guimarin in responding to requests from educators for historical videos produced by the office.*







*Clockwise from above: Paul Claussen was interviewed this spring in the Rare Book Room of the Ralph Bunche Library by both the Discovery Channel and the History Channel on aspects of Department history. Chris Morrison reviews visual images for a special project. Doug Kraft, Edmund Pechaty and intern Amin Eshaiker prepare copies of the video Sports and Diplomacy in the Global Arena for mailing. Myra Burton conducts research for Foreign Relations of the United States. Historical videos await shipment.*

“Let’s just say that we get a lot of practice at being both historians and diplomats,” he said.

The work of the office is reviewed four times each year by the Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, whose membership includes distinguished historians, political scientists, archivists and international lawyers. One of the Advisory Committee’s alumni is Philip D. Zelikow, the counselor of the Department.

But the Office of the Historian isn’t just about preserving the past; it’s also about decoding the historical record to help today’s policymakers make decisions. Former Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage repeatedly called on Dr. Susser for historical precedents and analogies in regard to our operations in Iraq. His requests—often with short-fuse deadlines—led him to describe the office as working

under “what amounts to combat conditions for scholars.” Former Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Richard Boucher described it as “history in the service of current policy.”

In fact, the office has a division just for historical policy studies, under Division Chief Paul Claussen, to research a wide variety of specialized questions.

“We get a lot of calls from the seventh floor, we’ve had calls from the Secretary’s plane, and we’re usually able to find the answers pretty quickly,” Dr. Susser said.

The office also provides assistance to individual bureaus and posts, as well as to the White House, tracking down everything from the name of a 19th-century consul to the makeup of prior presidential delegations. The office’s products range from short analytical papers to book-length organizational histories.



Perhaps surprisingly, the office has made several forays into the world of cultural diplomacy. A joint publication project with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is well advanced, while a similar project with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has just begun.

### SHARPER PROFILE

Dr. Susser has been the Department's historian since January 2001, and has worked to raise the office's profile and reputation in the academic community. In 2003, the office hosted its first academic conference, which was linked to the release of a long-awaited volume on U.S. policy toward Guatemala in 1954.

Two other conferences—on the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the 1971 South Asia crisis—have spotlighted key diplomatic incidents. The next conference, co-sponsored by George Washington University, is being held this month and will focus on President Nixon's opening to China.

"This office has always been an important source for college-level academics and students, but we're now reaching out to a younger audience, as well," Dr. Susser said. In 2002, the Office of the Historian began producing educational videos on diplomatic topics for middle- and high-school audiences. The first, *Terrorism: A War Without Borders*, was the most widely distributed video and curriculum package for high schools after September 11, and is still requested by teachers today.

Two other well-received videos followed: *A History of Diplomacy* and *Sports and Diplomacy in the Global Arena*. Next up, in December 2006: *Today in Washington: The Media and Diplomacy*.

"The impact has really been phenomenal," Dr. Susser said. "We've had teachers tell us that they never had any idea how much of a role diplomacy has played in American history. Helping students understand what an important job the Department of State does may well be the most important thing we can do for the future of our country." ■

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*The author is a senior historian in the Office of the Historian.*





# Show Me the Money

WHERE DO YOUR FOREIGN SERVICE  
RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS GO?

**BY DAVID B. DLOUHY**



The biweekly Foreign Service Earnings and Leave Statement Foreign Service employees find every two weeks at e-Phone contains under “Deductions” a line item for their retirement contributions to the Department pension fund: the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund. When the money is deducted from their earnings—either 7.25 percent (“old” Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System) or 1.35 percent (“new” Foreign Service Pension System) of their paycheck—where does it go?

The short, nontechnical answer is: West Virginia, to the Bureau of Public Debt. The longer answer is: South Carolina, where it reappears the first of every month as an electronic funds transfer paid by the Retirement Accounts Division in the annuity checks of one of the 15,345 Foreign Service annuitants. In between the start and finish lines is a large financial operation that manages the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

The Fund, with around \$14 billion in assets available for investments, is the largest single monetary asset held by the Department. Most Department Foreign Service annuitants are receiving payments under the old FSRDS pension plan. However, as of 2004, most employees are retiring under the new FSPS system. All employees hired since Dec. 31, 1983, are participants in the FSPS system, but many other employees also switched to the new system, giving them an old and new blend. There are only 1,447 active employees left in the old system. Both the old and new systems are part of the same pension fund.

### Healthy Surplus

Since this is about high finance and not multiplication of loaves and fishes, how do 12,168 active employees paying into the fund support 15,345 annuitants receiving payments from the fund? The answer lies in very sound actuarial management and accounting work by two bureaus, Human Resources and Resource Management, backed by the Department of the Treasury’s Bureau of the Public Debt. The Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund is unique among government pension funds because it has no unfunded liability and actually boasts a healthy surplus.

The conveyor belt that starts all Foreign Service careers at A-100 ends all careers at H-620, the Office of Retirement. The administrator of the fund—the director of the Office of Retirement—and the director for Global Compensation in the Bureau of Resource Management make sure that the fund is solvent and able to pay when retirement day comes for Foreign Service personnel. The Plan administrator must personally sign the public annual Actuarial Report for the Valuation of the Fund. A similar operation is run by the Office of Personnel Management, which runs the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund for all Civil Service employees. The two Foreign Service pension systems (FSRDS and FSPS) that make up The Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund, are among 36 federal pension systems.

U.S. Treasury securities are issued by the Treasury Department’s Bureau of the Public Debt. BPD’s primary function is to borrow the money needed to operate the federal government and to account for the resulting debt. BPD borrows the money necessary to fund the government by selling U.S. Savings Bonds, Treasury bills, Treasury notes and Treasury bonds to the general public and to government agencies.

Currently, 71 government agencies hold approximately 250 investment funds. Generally, these agencies have been granted the authority from Congress to invest in Government Account Series securities. Approximately \$3.6 trillion of the \$8.3 trillion total debt outstanding is invested in GAS securities. GAS securities include Overnight Certificates of Indebtedness, mirror-image market-based Treasury securities and par-value securities.

Overnight Certificates of Indebtedness are securities that mature within one business day. Mirror-image market-based securities include Treasury bills, notes and bonds whose yield is determined by the Treasury auction process and a secondary market. These securities cannot be purchased on the open market but are, in fact, issued in accordance with the prevailing market rate.

Par-value securities are similar to mirror-image Treasury bills because they can be purchased only from BPD and cannot be transferred into a secondary market. Par-value securities are different from market-based securities because their interest rate is determined by a formula specified in the fund’s authorizing legis-

## MO\$ EMPLOYEE\$ ADMIT THEY PAY LITTLE ATTENTION TO RETIREMENT DEDUCTION\$.

lation. They are issued at face value, with a specified rate of interest, which they pay on a semiannual basis.

### FS Investments

The Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund invests in par-value securities and holds its own investment portfolio with the Bureau of the Public Debt. The portfolio is developed and maintained by a fund manager in the Office of Global Compensation who determines the appropriate amount of money available for investment. The fund manager initiates requests for investments and redemptions by accessing BPD’s online investment system, FedInvest.

Only portions of the FSRDF that are not immediately required for the payment of annuities, cash benefits, refunds and allowances are invested in Treasury securities. BPD executes the transaction request for Treasury securities and provides confirmations for the fund managers. Since BPD processes only the transaction request made by the fund manager, the bureau maintains no detail of the investment portfolio with regard to individual beneficiaries or projects to which the monies are related. Other government agencies that invest in par-value securities include the Social Security Trust Funds, Unemployment Trust Funds and Civil Service Retirement Funds.

Most employees admit they pay little attention to their retirement deductions. They assume that, when the time comes, the money will be there for their retirement. They trust their biggest investment is being well managed and is a sure thing. Fortunately, thanks to a lot of behind-the-scenes work from Department employees at State and Treasury, the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund is solvent and secure. ■

*The author is the administrator of the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund and director of the Office of Retirement.*



# EDUCATION + TRAINING

## Student Records Online

Need your class schedule or an unofficial transcript of training taken through FSI? Visit the FSI Registrar's Office web page on the Department of State OpenNet at <http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg>.

## Mandatory Leadership Training

Leadership training is mandatory for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees at the FS-03/GS-13 levels and above to ensure that they have the necessary preparation for increasing levels of responsibility. FSI's Leadership and Management School offers the required courses to meet these mandatory training requirements and other leadership courses for all FS and GS employees.

### Mandatory Courses

#### FS-3/GS-13

PK245 Basic Leadership Skills

#### FS-2/GS-14

PT207 Intermediate Leadership Skills

#### FS-1/GS-15

PT210 Advanced Leadership Skills

#### Managers and Supervisors

PT107 EEO Diversity Awareness for Managers and Supervisors

#### Newly promoted FS-OC/SES

PT133 Senior Executive Threshold Seminar

## FasTrac Distance Learning: Learn at Your Own Pace, When and Where You Want!

All State Department employees, FSNs and EFM's are eligible. With your FasTrac password, you may access the entire FasTrac catalog of more than 3,000 courses, from home or office (Intranet or Internet). Courses cover numerous topics, such as project management, computer skills and grammar and writing skills, as

well as soft skills such as leadership. To view the FasTrac catalog, visit the FasTrac web site at <http://fsi.state.gov/fastrac>.

## FSI Distance Learning Program

An extensive menu of FSI-developed distance learning courses is also available to eligible participants on the FSI learning management system. See (U) State 009772 dated January 14, 2005, or the FSI web page (Distance Learning) for information.

Dates for FSI Transition Center Courses are shown below. For information on all the courses available at FSI, visit the Schedule of Courses on the Department of State's OpenNet at <http://fsi.state.gov>. See Department Notices for announcements of new courses and new course dates and periodic announcements of external training opportunities sponsored by FSI. For additional information, please contact the Office of the Registrar at (703) 302-7144/7137.

### Security

	Oct	Nov	Length
MQ911 SOS: Security Overseas Seminar	10, 23	6, 20	2 D
MQ912 ASOS: Advanced Security Overseas Seminar	17	28	1 D

### Foreign Service Life Skills

	Oct	Nov	Length
MQ104 Regulations Allowances and Finances in the Foreign Service Context		29	3 D
MQ107 English Teaching Seminar		27	2 D
MQ111 Making Presentations: Design to Delivery	30		3 D
MQ116 Protocol and U.S. Representation Abroad	28	18	1 D
MQ302 Transition to Washington for Foreign Born Spouses	14		2 H
MQ703 Post Options for Employment and Training	19		1 D
MQ802 Communicating Across Cultures	27		1 D
MQ803 Realities of Foreign Service Life		4	1 D
MQ851 Raising Bilingual Children		15	2.5 H

### Career Transition Center

	Oct	Nov	Length
RV101 Retirement Planning Seminar		28	4 D
RV102 Job Search Program	2		8 W
RV103 Financial Management and Estate Planning		30	1 D
RV104 Annuities, Benefits and Social Security		29	1 D

Length: H = Hours, D = Days, W = Weeks

## Senior Policy Seminars

FSI's Leadership and Management School offers professional development and policy seminars for senior-level executives of the Department and the foreign affairs/national security community.

For more information contact FSI's Leadership and Management School at (703) 302-6743, [FSILMS@state.gov](mailto:FSILMS@state.gov) or <http://fsiweb.fsi.state.gov/fsi/lms>.

# The Road to Bali

By Charles N. Silver

Office work can be hazardous to our health. We sit at our desks for long hours, sending and receiving e-mail, talking on the telephone and moving from one meeting to another. Some of our more dedicated colleagues are disciplined enough to fit regular exercise into their lives. For many of us, however, when the doctor asks, "How often do you exercise?" we feel twinges of guilt and produce evasive answers.

"Well, I sort of try to work out twice a week," we might say, knowing full well that this is a goal as often missed as met.

Recently, Jakarta Regional Medical Officer Dr. Chuck Wright decided to confront this dilemma head-on. Dr. Wright challenged the members of the American and Foreign Service National staff to walk to Bali.

No, the embassy did not close while we took to the road en masse. Instead, Dr. Wright challenged everyone to take 10,000 steps each day right on the embassy grounds, at home and in the surrounding area. Each person who did this for 120 days would "walk" the equivalent of 600 miles—the distance that separates Bali from Jakarta.

To make the virtual walk more appealing, Dr. Wright donated an actual trip to Bali. Everyone who successfully "walked to Bali" became eligible for the drawing for a round-trip air ticket to Bali.

Ten thousand steps burn about 500 calories, and since walking can be done without equipment, anytime, and anywhere, it is the ideal exercise to fit into a busy day.

The Medical Unit began by issuing pedometers so participants could record the number of steps they took each day. When the pedometers were issued, the medical unit staff members took baseline measurements of each participant's blood pressure, weight and body mass to be compared with the same data four months later.

The pedometers were essential. Having immediate feedback on how we were doing made a tremendous difference, and people began changing their habits to increase their totals.

Dr. Wright also came up with some creative ideas for getting people up and moving about the embassy. He suggested that we all use different restrooms on the embassy grounds—the farther away, the better. If a person had to climb stairs to get there, that was a plus. Dr. Wright even installed a treadmill in an office lobby so that people could walk for a few minutes in an air-conditioned area without having to go to the gym.

As the "walk" progressed, Dr. Wright and his crew posted monthly progress reports. One report read: "On November 30, 2005, you must have reached the city of Pasuran. You're still on (the island of) Java but have already gone 450 miles on your way to Bali. Pasuran hosts the following tourist attractions..." The rest of the report described what we would have seen on a real walk to Bali and made most of us wish we had been doing the real thing.

The results of this effort were amazing. Sedentary individuals changed their habits, leaving their desks to walk over and talk to colleagues rather than sending an e-mail or picking up the phone. People were seen pacing back and forth while waiting for

meetings, often casting circumspect glances at their pedometers. Since the important thing is moving and expending calories, some of the staff members even developed the pedometer shuffle—a short version of the "twist"—when they met in the hallways. It usually counted for about 10 steps.

The biggest benefit was the realization that it is possible to exercise while working. Having a daily record was an important incentive. People who had not achieved their target during the day would often return home, look at their pedometer and decide that they needed to take a walk or go to the gym to get their step total up to the target.

At the end, almost 10 percent of the participants went the distance, losing a fair amount of weight and lowering their collective blood pressure. Best of all, long after the challenge ended, some people were still wearing their pedometers. Dr. Wright's challenge had indeed led to improved health awareness and better habits among some of us. ■

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*The author is public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia.*



*Ambassador  
B. Lynn Pascoe  
shows off his  
pedometer.*





# JUST DRIVE

DON'T MULTITASK WHEN BEHIND THE WHEEL **BY EILEEN VERITY**

My son's car was hit from behind while stopped at a traffic light. The driver in the car following was busy changing the CD and did not see the light turn red or the red brake lights on my son's car. Fortunately, the rear-end collision was a minor fender bender with no serious injuries.

How many times have you watched a car in the rearview mirror approach your stopped car and wondered if it was going to stop? How often have you followed a car that is not keeping up with traffic and wondered if something was wrong with the driver? And how often have you passed that car and realized that the driver was on the cell phone, talking to others in the car, eating breakfast, reading or looking at a map? How often was that distracted driver you?

# HEALTHY HERO



## This Quitter Wins

Cecilia LeBlanc is a quitter. Although for years she thought she would never succeed in quitting, she has now been smoke-free for all of 2006. She and her husband quit on New Year's Day.

How did she do it?

"With a little help from my friends," she says. "I have been a smoker for 30 years. My family and friends, who include many health care professionals, have urged me to quit. I have attempted to quit about six times, with the longest period being four months. Finally, one of them stopped nagging and told me how much it meant to have us in his life and that he wanted us in it for a long time. That really affected me.

"Another big motivation was that a very good friend and smoking buddy from our last post was diagnosed with lung cancer. She was always in excellent physical condition. I guess the 'it couldn't happen to me' syndrome hit home."

Cecilia still has cravings, but is able to work through them and doesn't plan to ever light up again.

"I'm determined to improve my life, and have cleared the first hurdle," she says. "I have received excellent support from a very good friend in the Med Unit, and I know now that I can't have a cigarette with a drink because I will go right back to smoking."

Cecilia works in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs in the Office of Regional Affairs.

A Department of Transportation report issued in April found that drivers engaging in visually or manually complex tasks (changing the radio station or climate controls, shaving, putting on makeup, dialing a cell phone) have a three times higher near-crash or crash risk than drivers who are conscientious about their driving.

Driver distraction or inattentive driving occurs when a driver's ability to recognize information needed to drive safely is delayed by an interruption inside or outside the vehicle. Many driver safety programs recommend that drivers shift their eyes every two seconds and check the rearview mirrors every five to eight seconds. Any glance away from the road in front that lasts more than two seconds increases the crash risk.

Information overload or inattention (physically not looking or mentally thinking of other things) can cause the driver to miss a cue for an action he or she must take. The situation around the vehicle can change instantly and drivers cannot predict a safe time to look away. The most frequently reported distraction was using a handheld device, either a cell phone or personal digital assistant. Dialing, listening or talking have the same crash risk. Dialing is more dangerous, because it takes the eyes and focus off the road, but it occurs less often.

The type of driving distraction is often age-related. Changing CDs or tuning the radio most often distracts drivers under 20. Passengers are often the distraction for ages 20 to 29. Events or objects outside of the vehicle, such as construction or accidents often distract drivers over age 65. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that at least one in every four police-reported crashes (4,000–8,000 a day) involves some form of driver inattention.

If you eat, drink, smoke, tune the radio, talk on the cell phone, break up fights between your kids, shave or put on make up while driving, you are a distracted driver.

The following tips will reduce the likelihood of being a distracted driver:

- Keep your hands on the wheel.
- Don't reach over to get something off the floor, out of the glove compartment or behind the drivers seat;
- Adjust your mirrors, radio or temperature controls before putting the vehicle in gear;
- Personal grooming can wait until the car is parked;
- Eat your meals at home or in a restaurant, not on the go;
- Pull over to answer cell phones. Call or send text messages when you reach your destination.
- Keep your eyes and mind on the road.
- Plan your route before you leave or ask someone to be your co-pilot and read the map for you;
- Try to avoid emotional conversations while driving;
- Don't "rubberneck" at accidents (you have seen it all before);
- Don't look away to change the music.

Talk to other drivers in your family about the importance of avoiding driver distractions. We live in a multitasking world, but driving must remain a single task to have a safe journey for yourself, your family and others with whom you share the road. ■

*The author is a safety and occupational health specialist with the Division of Safety, Health and Environmental Management.*





# Passion's GIFT

ACCOMPLISHED PAINTER FILLS CANVAS  
WITH LIGHT AND FEELING

**BY MARK A. CAUDILL**





# Every Saturday morning,

Ayfle Köseo lu leaves home for an appointment with passion.

A busy wife, mother and Locally Employed Staff member working in the consular section at the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul, Ms. Köseo lu's weekly rendezvous occurs at a small, serene studio near the Bosphorus—one of the world's busiest sea lanes—where she spends the day painting portraits and landscapes.

"I started painting to give myself a gift," says Ms. Köseo lu. "I needed a break from my routine and a way to express my feelings."

Her talent manifested itself early; an elementary school teacher was impressed enough to suggest a career in art, but Ms. Köseo lu's parents directed her toward more conventional pursuits. The painting bug lay dormant for decades and was reawakened when she found a drawing of a garden, one of many she had made as a child for her friends.

"For a long time I felt that something in my life was missing," she says. "By picking up the brush again, I felt that a piece of my soul had been restored."

Nine years later, Ms. Köseo lu, 42, has progressed from self-taught dabbler to an accomplished artist whose style reflects the Impressionists she adores.

Light is the key element in painting, according to Ms. Köseo lu, who works exclusively from photographs that show the delicate interplay between sun and shadows.

"Cezanne, Renoir, Monet—these painters taught me the importance of light, that what you leave off the canvas is as important as what you put on it," she says. "Like me, some of the great masters lacked formal training but put so much soul into their works that you can feel what they felt."

Does she regret not having formally studied art in school?

"I am comfortable with the technique I have developed," she says, "but I do sometimes wonder how many women like me—here and in other countries—miss opportunities to develop their talents because they are expected to conform to what is socially acceptable. What I would not give to have been a man during the Renaissance and apprenticed with da Vinci."

For Ms. Köseo lu, art's ability to bridge cultures as well as time makes it important. She feels at peace when she paints; the peace in art makes her believe there must be art in peace. She thinks exposure to art can open hearts and minds.

"Art teaches us to see the world differently, a facility everyone—particularly those of us working in diplomacy—should strive to develop," she says.

Ms. Köseo lu paints under her maiden name, Kahriman. She has produced nearly 70 paintings, many of which have been sold. An exhibition of her works is on display at the Consulate General.

Although she was born in Ankara, Ms. Köseo lu's home since 1998, Istanbul is a favorite subject.

"Up close, the architecture here is a riot of clashing styles," she says. "But once you step back and take in the cityscape, the contrasts diminish and harmony emerges. The minarets and fog and shadows along the Bosphorus convey a unique mixture of joy and sorrow."

Ms. Köseo lu hopes to capture on canvas scenes from Turkey's rapidly changing countryside before modernity completely overtakes the traditional way of life.

More of her paintings may be viewed on her web site, [www.aysekahriman.com](http://www.aysekahriman.com). ■



*The author works in the consular section of the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul.*





## U.S. Ambassador to Croatia

**Robert Anthony Bradtke** of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia. Until recently, he was executive secretary of the Secretary's Accountability Review Board. Prior to that, he was a principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. His other assignments include Georgetown, Zagreb, Moscow, Bonn and London. He is married.



## U.S. Ambassador to Moldova

**Michael D. Kirby** of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. Prior to this assignment, he was consul general in Seoul. His other overseas assignments include Georgetown, Dar es Salaam, Krakow, Frankfurt and Warsaw. He is married and has two daughters.



## U.S. Ambassador to Benin

**Gayleatha Beatrice Brown** of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin. Until recently, she was counselor for political affairs in South Africa. Her other overseas assignments include Strasbourg, Harare, Dar es Salaam, Paris and Abidjan. Before joining the Department, she worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Congress.



## U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

**Michael E. Ranneberger** of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya. Until recently, he was senior representative on Sudan in the Bureau of African Affairs. Before that, he was the bureau's principal deputy assistant secretary. His other overseas assignments include Maputo, Asunción, Mogadishu, Haiti and Mali, where he was ambassador.



## Assistant Secretary for Administration

**Rajkumar Chellaraj** of Texas, a government official and business executive, is the new Assistant Secretary for Administration. Until recently, he was director of corporate development at Celanese Corporation. He also worked for Exxon Corporation and held high-level positions with the U.S. Mint, U.S. Agency for International Development and Environmental Protection Agency. He is married and has a son.



## U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine

**William B. Taylor Jr.** of Virginia, a government official, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine. Prior to that, he was U.S. representative to the Quartet's effort to facilitate Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. He has also served as director of the Iraq Reconstruction Office in Baghdad and coordinated U.S. assistance to Afghanistan and the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He was an infantry officer in the Army. He is married and has two children.

# \*retirements

## Foreign Service >>>

Alfonso, Betty M.  
Cole, Orville L.  
Davenport, Joseph  
Edward  
Dent Jr., Lynwood M.  
Droney, Dennis Alan  
Ellison, Michael E.  
Evans, Trevor James  
Frese, John Herbert

Gonzalez, Richard F.  
Hartnett-Kelly, Patricia A.  
Leahy, W. P.  
Magee, Rebecca A.  
Mallory, Thurron Jackson  
McKniff, Joan  
Sack, Larry A.  
Weaver, Stephen J.

## Civil Service >>>

Beckmann, Richard S.  
Besson, Wanda Kay  
Bynum, Willie J.  
Chadran, Jijis M.  
Cheatham, Donald  
Cook, Linda D.  
Cormier, Elizabeth C.  
Curry, Jannie O.  
Davidson, Michael E.  
Eaglin, Geraldine E.  
Ellis, Susan S.  
Farwell, Janet E L.  
Hardrick, Margaret L.  
Healey, Judith K.

Hickman, Elida L.  
Holsendorff, Earl F.  
Hunter, Jacqueline D.  
Jackson, Roberta B.  
Lader, Paula S.  
Lang, Hien N.  
Lawrence Jr., Malcolm  
Livers, Hildagard D.  
Marshall, Brenda A.  
Matsuno, Barbara F.  
McCurry, Lizabeth M.  
Meyer, Susan A.  
Mitchell, Warren  
Palmer-Royston, Sharon E.

Phillips, Loretta Antonini  
Popovich, Patricia Ann  
Richardson, Alvin B.  
Roman, Margaret E.  
Short, Shirley Pitts  
Snowden, Marijean  
Stafford, Mark Merrill  
Starr, Nancy H.  
Thompson, Richard A.  
Ward, Everett B.  
Watkins, Calvin S.  
Williams, Yvonne P.  
Woodard, William  
Augustus



**<<< Robert A. Clark Jr.**, 85, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 19 of bladder cancer in Woodbridge, Va. He briefly served in the Army Air Corps before joining the Department in 1944. His overseas postings included Matamoros, Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta and France. He was in charge of evacuating U.S. citizens from Hungary during the Hungarian revolution of 1956. In retire-

ment, he served on a volunteer rescue squad and taught English as a second language.



**<<< Jake M. Dyels Jr.**, 72, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 12 of cancer in Brentwood, Calif. He served in the Navy and Peace Corps before joining the Department in 1969. He retired in 1997. He served overseas in Newfoundland, Bogotá, Panama City, Colombo, Amsterdam and Monterrey. In the latter two posts he was consul general and principal officer.

**Lisa Marie Emerine-Cruise**, 39, daughter of deceased Foreign Service officers Frank and Sally Emerine, died April 30 of complications of diabetes in Ravenna, Ohio. She lived with her parents in Liberia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand, Egypt and Indonesia. She worked at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta. Prior to her death, she was studying to become a nurse.



**<<< Steve Koumanelis**, 86, a retired Civil Service employee who worked in arms control, died June 8 in Arlington, Va. He served in the Army in World War II. After he retired from the Department in 1988, he enjoyed reading, tennis and traveling with his wife to Greece, Canada and around the U.S.

**John E. MacDonald**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Sept. 29, 2005, in Exeter, New Hampshire. He joined the Department in 1945 and served overseas in Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo and Saigon. He transferred to the Civil Service and worked on intelligence matters, becoming chief of the South Asia Division. He retired in 1968.



**<<< Marlin Kent Mackebon**, 64, a retired Foreign Service facilities maintenance manager, died May 18 in Beijing, China. He joined the Department in 1994 and served overseas in Islamabad. After retiring in 2003, he worked as a contractor on the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou and the new U.S. Embassy in Beijing. He was active in his church.



**<<< Robert L. Nichols**, 81, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 12 of cancer in Yarmouthport, Mass. After serving in the Pacific in World War II, he joined the U.S. Information Agency and served overseas in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, the Netherlands and Italy. He retired to Cape Cod in 1979, where he taught Chinese culture and history and conducted study groups to China.

**Geraldine R. Sheehan**, 81, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 2 in Washington, D.C., after a brief illness. She was an editor at the *New York Times* before joining the Department in 1962. Her overseas postings included Liberia and Somalia. After retiring in 1984, she served on the Foreign Service Grievance Board until 1992. She enjoyed reading.



**<<< Charlette "Charlie" R. Springer**, 57, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 5 of congestive heart failure in Alexandria, Va. She joined the U.S. Information Agency in 1975 and served overseas in Russia, Venezuela, Israel and England. She retired in 2005.



**<<< Dorothy L. "Peggy" Woosley**, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died March 2. Her overseas postings included Wiesbaden, Turin, Durban, Tehran, West Berlin, Vienna and Warsaw. After retiring in 1987, she worked part-time for the Department in Geneva, the Hague, St. Petersburg and Washington. She was active in her church, tutored, enjoyed playing the piano and sang in choirs around the world.





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“We get a lot of practice being both historians and diplomats.”

Marc J. Susser  
*“Learning History’s Lessons”*  
 Page 34

## COMING IN OCTOBER

A Greener Future  
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# POSSIBLE REASONS I HAVE NOT BEEN PROMOTED

by F. Burston  
Witworth



WAS IT THAT SMALL MISUNDERSTANDING WITH  
THE AMBASSADOR OF BORZASZTOSTAN AT THEIR  
NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION?



AND WHAT MAKES  
YOU THINK YOU'RE SO  
EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENI POTENTIARY?

IS IT ENVY OF MY LUXURIOUSLY THICK HEAD  
OF HAIR?



YEAH, YEAH, WHATEVER ON

THAT POLICY PAPER. SO ANYWAY  
THE REAL SURPRISE WAS WHEN I CHANGED  
MY CREAM RINSE  
ROUTINE...

PERHAPS A LACK OF APPRECIATION FOR MY  
DEVOTION TO MY ART AS ONE OF THE  
DIPLOMATIC READINESS DANCERS?



COME ON - THINK STAFFING STRATEGY  
AND FEEL THE  
BURN!

JEALOUSY OF MY ABILITY TO REGULARLY EXPAND  
MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE MORNING STAFF MEETING TO  
A VERBAL TOUR DE FORCE SHOWCASING MY SKILLS AS  
A RACONTEUR AND MASTER OF MINUTIAE?



... SO I SAID THAT'S ANOTHER REASON I SHOULDN'T HAVE  
TO WRITE THE MEMO - WHICH REMINDS ME OF A  
FUNNY STORY ABOUT MY CREAM RINSE...

IT SEEMS IMPROBABLE, BUT WOULD MY  
GREATNESS BE MORE EASILY RECOGNIZED  
IF I DABBLED MORE OFTEN IN THAT  
CONVENTIONAL "WORK" MY OFFICE SEEMS  
TO EXPECT?







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